

INCREASE IN NAVY URGED BY TAFT

(Continued from Page One.)

tem are given or permitted any advantages of opportunity over those of the other system. And I trust also that the new legislation will carefully and completely protect and assure the individuality and the independence of each bank, to the end that any tendency there may ever be toward a consolidation of the money or banking power of the nation shall be defeated.

It will always be possible, of course, to correct any features of the new law which may in practice prove to be unwelcome; so that while this law is sure to be enacted under conditions of unusual knowledge and authority, it also will include it is well to remember, the possibility of future amendment.

With the present prospects of this long-anticipated reform encouraging us, it would be singularly unfortunate if this monetary question should by any chance become a party issue. And I sincerely hope it will not. The exceeding amount of consideration it has received from the people of the nation has been wholly nonpartisan; and the congress set its partisan seal upon it when the monetary commission was appointed. In commending the question to the favorable consideration of congress, I speak for, and in the spirit of, the great number of my fellow citizens who without any thought of party or partisanship feel with remarkable earnestness that this reform is necessary to the interests of all the people.

The War Department.

There is now before congress a bill, the purpose of which is to increase the efficiency and decrease the expense of the army. It contains four principal features: First, a consolidation of the general staff with the adjutant general's and the inspector general's departments; second, a consolidation of the quartermaster's department with the subsistence and the pay departments; third, the creation of an army service corps; and fourth, an extension of the enlistment period from three to five years.

With the establishment of an army service corps, as proposed in the bill, I am thoroughly in accord and am convinced that the establishment of such a corps will result in a material economy and a very great increase of efficiency in the army. It has repeatedly been recommended by me and my predecessors. I also believe that a consolidation of the staff corps can be made with a resulting increase in efficiency and economy, but not along the lines provided in the bill under consideration.

I am opposed to any plan the result of which would be to break up or interfere with the essential principles of the detail system in the staff corps established by the act of February 2, 1901, and I am opposed to any plan the result of which would be to give to the officer selected as chief of staff

or to any other member of the general staff corps greater permanency of office than he now has. Under the existing law neither the chief of staff nor any other member of the general staff corps can remain in office for a period of more than four years, and there must be an interval of two years between successive tours of duty.

The bill referred to provides that certain persons shall become permanent members of the general staff corps, and that certain others are subject to reappointment without an interval of two years. Such provision is fraught with danger to the welfare of the army, and would practically nullify the main purpose of the law creating the general staff.

In making the consolidations no reduction should be made in the total number of officers of the army, of whom there are now too few to perform the duties imposed by law. I have in the past recommended an increase in the number of officers by 600 in order to provide sufficient officers to perform all classes of staff duty and to reduce the number of line officers detached from their commands. Congress at the last session increased the total number of officers by 200, but this is not enough. Promotion in the line of the army is too slow. Officers do not attain command rank at an age early enough properly to exercise it. It would be a mistake further to retard this already slow promotion by throwing back into the line of the army a number of high-ranking officers to be absorbed as is provided in the proposed plan of consolidation.

Another feature of the bill which I believe to be a mistake is the proposed increase in the term of enlistment from three to five years. I believe it would be better to enlist men for six years, release them at the end of three years from active service, and put them in reserve for the remaining three years. Reenlistments should be largely confined to the non-commissioned officers and other enlisted men in the skilled grades. This plan, by the payment of a comparatively small compensation during the three years of reserve, would keep a large body of men at the call of the government, trained and ready for service and able to meet any emergency.

The army of the United States is in good condition. It showed itself able to meet an emergency in the successful mobilization of an army division of 15,000 to 20,000 men, which took place along the border of Mexico during the recent disturbances in that country. The marvelous freedom from the ordinary camp diseases of typhoid fever and measles is referred to in the report of the secretary of war, and shows such an effectiveness in the sanitary regulations and treatment of the medical corps, and in the discipline of the army itself, as to invoke the highest commendation.

Memorial Amphitheater at Arlington.

I beg to renew my recommendation of last year that the congress appropriate for a memorial amphitheater at Arlington, Va. the funds required to construct it upon the plans already approved.

The Panama Canal.

The very satisfactory progress on the Panama canal last year has continued, and there is every reason to

believe that the canal will be completed as early as the 1st of July, 1913, unless something unforeseen occurs. This is about 18 months before the time promised by the engineers.

We are now near enough the completion of the canal to make it imperative that legislation should be enacted to fix the method by which the canal shall be maintained and controlled and the zone governed. The fact is that today there is no statutory law by authority of which the president is maintaining the government of the zone. Such authority was given in an amendment to the Spooner act, which expired by the terms of its own limitation some years ago. Since that time the government has continued, under the advice of the attorney general that in the absence of action by congress, there is necessarily an implied authority on the part of the executive to maintain a government in a territory in which he has to see that the laws are executed. The fact that we have been able thus to get along during the important days of construction without legislation is a very satisfactory thing. The government is now formulating the government of the zone, or delegating the creation of it to the president, is not a reason for supposing that we may continue the same kind of a government after the construction is finished. The implied authority of the president to maintain a civil government in the zone may be derived from the mandatory direction given him in the original Spooner act, by which he was commanded to build the canal; but certainly, now that the canal is about to be completed and to be put under a permanent management, there ought to be specific statutory authority for its regulation and control and for the government of the zone, which we hold for the chief and main purpose of operating the canal.

I fully concur with the secretary of war that the problem is simply the management of a great public work, and not the government of a local republic; that every provision must be directed toward the successful maintenance of the canal as an avenue of commerce, and that all provisions for the government of those who live within the zone should be subordinate to the main purpose.

The zone is 40 miles long and 10 miles wide. Now, it has a population of 50,000 or 60,000, but as soon as the work of construction is completed, the towns which make up this population will be deserted, and only comparatively few natives will continue their residence there. The control of them ought to be approximately a military government. One judge and two justices of the peace will be sufficient to attend to all the judicial and litigated business there. With a few fundamental laws of congress, the zone should be governed by the orders of the president, issued through the military department, as it is today. Provisions can be made for the guarantee of life, liberty, and property, but beyond those, the government should be that of a military reservation, managed in connection with this great highway of trade.

Furnishing Supplies and Repairs.

In my last annual message I discussed at length the reasons for the government's assuming the task of furnishing to all ships that use the canal, whether our own naval vessels or others, the supplies of coal and other necessities with which they must be replenished either before or after passing through the canal, together with the dock facilities and repairs of every character. This it is thought wise to do through the government, because the government must establish for itself, for its own naval vessels, large depots and dry docks and warehouses, and these may easily be entered as a source of supply for the world's traffic using the canal. The canal is a public utility, and the government has a duty to see that there will be no discrimination between those who wish to avail themselves of such facilities.

I renew my recommendation with respect to the tolls for the canal that within limits, which shall seem wise to congress, the power of fixing tolls be given to the president. In order to arrive at some conclusion there must be some experimenting, and this can not be done if congress does not delegate the power to one who can act expeditiously.

Power Exists to Relieve American Shipping.

I am very confident that the United States has the power to relieve from the payment of tolls any part of our shipping that congress deems wise. We own the canal. It is our money that built it. We have the right to charge tolls for its use. Those tolls must be the same to everyone; but when we are dealing with our own ships, the practice of many governments of subsidizing their own mercantile vessels is so well established in general that a subsidy equal to the tolls, an equivalent remission of tolls, can not be held to be a discrimination in the use of the canal. The practice in the Suez canal makes this clear. The experiment in tolls to be made by the president would doubtless disclose how great a burden of tolls the coastwise trade between the Atlantic and the Pacific coast could bear without preventing its usefulness in competition with the transcontinental railroads. One of the chief reasons for building the canal was to set up this competition and to bring the two shores closer together as a practical trade problem. It may be that the tolls will have to be wholly remitted. I do not think this is the best principle, because I believe that the cost of such a government work as the Panama canal ought to be imposed gradually by certainty upon the trade which it creates and makes possible, so far as we can, consistent with the development of the world's trade through the canal, and the benefit which it was intended to secure to the east and west coastwise trade, we ought to labor to secure from the canal tolls a sufficient amount ultimately to meet the debt which we have assumed to pay the interest.

The Philippine Islands.

In respect to the Philippines, I urgently join in the recommendation of the secretary of war that the act of February 6, 1905, limiting the indebtedness that may be incurred by the Philippine government for the construction of public works, be increased from \$5,000,000 to \$15,000,000. The finances of that government are in excellent condition. The maximum sum mentioned is quite low as compared with the amount of indebtedness of other governments with similar resources, and the success which has attended the expenditure of the \$5,000,000 in the useful improvements of the harbors and other places in the islands justifies and requires additional expenditures for like purposes.

Naturalization.

I also join in the recommendation that the legislature of the Philippine islands be authorized to provide for the naturalization of Filipinos and others who by the present law are treated as aliens, so as to enable them to become citizens of the Philippine islands.

The Important Problem

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Private Lands.

Pending an investigation by congress at its last session, through one of its committees, into the disposition of the private lands, Secretary Dickinson directed that the private lands should not be sold in excess of the limits fixed for the public lands until congress should pass upon the subject or should have concluded its investigation. This order has been an obstruction to the disposition of the lands, and I expect to direct the secretary of war to return to the practice under the opinion of the attorney general which will enable us to dispose of the lands much more promptly, and to prepare a sinking fund with which to meet the \$7,000,000 of bonds issued for the purchase of the lands. I have no doubt whatever that the attorney general's construction was a proper one, and that it is in the interest of everyone that the land shall be promptly disposed of. The danger of creating a monopoly of ownership in lands under the statutes as construed is nothing. There are only two tracts of 60,000 each unimproved and in remote provinces that are likely to be disposed of in bulk, and the rest of the lands are subject to the limitation that they shall be first offered to the present tenants and lessors who hold them in small tracts.

Rivers and Harbors.

The estimates for the river and harbor improvements reach \$22,000,000 for the coming year. I wish to urge that whenever a project has been adopted by congress as one to be completed, the more money which can be economically expended in its construction in each year, the greater the benefit to the country. This has special application to the improvement of the Mississippi river and its large branches. It seems to me that an increase in the amount of money now being annually expended in the improvement of the Ohio river which has been formally adopted by congress would be in the interest of the public. A similar change ought to be made during the present congress, in the amount to be appropriated for the Missouri river. The engineers say that the cost of the improvement of the Missouri river from Kansas City to St. Louis, in order to secure six feet as a permanent channel, will reach \$20,000,000. There have been at least three recommendations from the chief of engineers that if the improvement be adopted, \$20,000,000 should be expended upon it annually. This particular improvement is especially entitled to the attention of congress, because a company has been organized in Kansas City, with a capital of \$1,000,000, which has built steamers and barges, and is actually using the river for transportation in order to show what can be done in the way of affecting rates between Kansas City and St. Louis, and in order to manifest their good faith and confidence in respect of the improvement. I recently recommended that the appropriation for this improvement be increased from \$500,000, as recommended now in the completion of a contract, to \$2,000,000 annually, so that the work may be done in ten years.

Waterway from the Lakes to the Gulf.

The project for a navigable water-

way from Lake Michigan to the mouth of the Illinois river, and thence via the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico, is one of national importance. In view of the work already accomplished by the sanitary district of Chicago, an agency of the state of Illinois, which has constructed the most difficult and costly stretch of this waterway and made it an asset of the nation, and in view of the fact that the people of Illinois have authorized the expenditure of \$20,000,000 to carry this waterway 82 miles farther to Utica, I feel that it is fitting that this work should be supplemented by the government, and that the expenditures recommended by the special board of engineers on the waterway from Utica to the mouth of the Illinois river be made upon lines which while providing a waterway for the nation should otherwise benefit that state to the fullest extent. I recommend that the term of service of said special board of engineers be continued, and that it be empowered to reopen the question of treatment of the lower Illinois river, and to negotiate with a properly constituted commission representing the state of Illinois, and to agree upon a plan for the improvement of the lower Illinois river and upon the extent to which the United States may properly cooperate with the state of Illinois in securing the construction of a navigable waterway from Lockport to the mouth of the Illinois river in conjunction with the development of water power by that state between Lockport and Utica.

The Department of Justice.

Removal of Clerks of Federal Courts. The report of the attorney general shows that he has subjected to close examination the accounts of the clerks of the federal courts; that he has found a good many which disclose irregularities or dishonesty; but that he has had considerable difficulty in securing an effective prosecution or removal of the clerks thus derelict. I am certainly not unduly prejudiced against the federal courts, but the fact is that the long and confidential relations which grow out of the tenure for life on the part of the judge and the practical tenure for life on the part of the clerk are not calculated to secure the strictness of dealing by the judge with the clerk in respect to his fees and accounts which assures in the clerk's conduct a freedom from overcharges and carelessness. The relationship between the judge and the clerk makes it impossible for members of the bar to complain of the clerk or for the department examiners to make charges against him to be heard by the court, and an order of removal of a clerk and a judgment for the recovery of fees are in some cases reluctantly entered by the judge. For this reason I recommend an amendment to the law whereby the president shall be given power to remove the clerks for cause. This proposal need not interfere with the right of the judge to appoint his clerk or to remove him.

French Spoliation Awards.

In my last message I recommended to congress that it authorize the payment of the findings or judgments of the court of claims in the matter of the French spoliation cases. There has been no appropriation to pay these judgments since 1905. The findings and awards were obtained after a very bitter fight, the government succeeding in about 75 per cent of the cases. The amount of the awards sought, as a matter of good faith on the part of the government, to be paid.

Employers' Liability and Workmen's Compensation Commission.

The limitation of the liability of the master to his servant for personal injuries to such as are occasioned by his fault has been abandoned in most civilized countries and provisions made whereby the employee injured in the course of his employment is compensated for his loss of working ability irrespective of negligence. The principle upon which such provision proceeds is that accidental injuries to workmen in modern industry, with its vast complexity and inherent dangers arising from complicated machinery and the use of great forces of steam and electricity, should be regarded as risks if the industry and the loss borne in some equitable proportion by those who for their own profit engage therein. In recognition of this the last congress authorized the appointment of a commission to investigate the subject of employers' liability and workmen's compensation and to report the result of their investigations, through the attorney general, to congress. This commission was appointed and has been at work, holding hearings, gathering data, and considering the subject, and it is expected will be able to report by the first of the year, in accordance with the provisions of the law. It is hoped and expected that the commission will suggest legislation which will enable us to put in the place of the present wasteful and ineffectual system of employers' liability a just system of compensation which will afford some certain and definite relief to all employees who are injured in the course of their employment in those industries which are subject to the regulating power of congress.

Measures to Prevent Delay and Unnecessary Cost of Litigation.

In promotion of the movement for the prevention of delay and unnecessary cost, in litigation, I am glad to say that the supreme court has taken steps to reform the present equity rules of the federal courts, and that we may in the near future expect a revision of them which will be a long step in the right direction.

The American Bar association has recommended to congress several bills expediting procedure, one of which has already passed the house unanimously, February 6, 1911. This directs that no judgment should be set aside on appeal or reversed or a new trial granted unless it appears to the court, after an examination of the entire cause, that the error complained of has injuriously affected the substantial rights of the parties, and also provides for the submission of issues of fact to a jury, reserving questions of law for subsequent argument and decision. I hope this bill will pass the senate and become law, for it will simplify the procedure of law.

Another bill to amend chapter 11 of the judicial code, in order to avoid errors in pleading, was presented by the same association, and one enlarging the jurisdiction of the supreme court so as to permit that court to examine, upon a writ of error, all

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cases in which any right or title is claimed under the constitution, or any statute or treaty of the United States, which is the weight limit for the international parcel post, or at the post office from which such route emanates, or on another route emanating from the same office. Such preliminary service will prepare the way for the more thorough and comprehensive inquiry contemplated in making for the department to gain definite information concerning the practical operation of a general system, and at the same time extend the benefits of the service to a class of people who, above all others, are specially in need of it.

Post Office.

At the beginning of the present administration in 1909 the postal service was in arrears to the extent of \$17,429,770.47. It was very much the largest deficit on record. In the brief space of two years this has been turned into a surplus of \$129,000, which has been accomplished without curtailment of the postal facilities, as may be seen by the fact that there have been established 3,744 new postoffices; delivery by carrier has been added to the service in 144 cities; 2,516 new rural routes have been established, covering 60,000 miles; the force of postal employees has been increased in these two years by more than 8,000, and their average annual salary has had a substantial increase.

Postal-Savings System.

On January 3, 1911, postal-savings depositories were established experimentally in 43 states and territories. After three months' successful operation the system was extended as rapidly as feasible to the 7,500 post offices of the first, second, and third classes constituting the presidential grade. By the end of the year practically all of these will have been designated and then the system will be extended to all fourth-class post offices doing a money-order business.

In selecting post offices for depositories consideration was given to the efficiency of the postmasters and only those offices where the ratings were satisfactory to the department have been designated. Withholding designation from postmasters with unsatisfactory ratings has had a salutary effect on the service.

The deposits have kept pace with the extension of the system. Amounting to only \$60,652 at the end of the first month's operation in the experimental offices, they increased to \$679,340 by July, and now after 11 months of operation have reached a total of \$11,990,000. This sum is distributed among 2,719 banks and protected under the law by bonds deposited with the treasurer of the United States.

Under the method adopted for the conduct of the system certificates are issued as evidence of deposits, and accounts with depositories are kept by the post offices instead of by the department. Compared with the practice in other countries of entering deposits in pass books and keeping at the central office a ledger account with each depository, the use of the certificate has resulted in great economy of administration.

The depositories thus far number approximately 150,000. They include 40 nationalities, native Americans largely predominating and English and Italians coming next.

The first conversion of deposits into United States bonds bearing interest at the rate of 2 1/2 per cent occurred on July 1, 1911, the amount of deposits exchanged being \$41,300, or a little more than six per cent of the total outstanding certificates of deposit on June 30. Of this issue, bonds to the value of \$6,120 were in coupon form and \$35,180 in registered form.

Parcel Post.

Steps should be taken immediately for the establishment of a rural parcel post. In the estimates of appropriations needed for the maintenance of the postal service for the ensuing fiscal year an item of \$150,000 has been inserted to cover the preliminary expense of establishing a parcel post on rural mail routes, as well as to cover an investigation having for its object the final establishment of a general parcel post on all railway and steamboat transportation routes. The department believes that after the initial expense of establishing the system are defrayed and the parcel post is in full operation on the rural routes it will not only bring in sufficient revenue to meet its cost, but also a surplus that can be utilized in paying the expenses of a parcel post in the city delivery service.

It is hoped that congress will authorize the immediate establishment

of a limited parcel post on such rural routes as may be selected, providing for the delivery along the routes of parcels not exceeding eleven pounds, which is the weight limit for the international parcel post, or at the post office from which such route emanates, or on another route emanating from the same office. Such preliminary service will prepare the way for the more thorough and comprehensive inquiry contemplated in making for the department to gain definite information concerning the practical operation of a general system, and at the same time extend the benefits of the service to a class of people who, above all others, are specially in need of it.

The suggestion that we have a general parcel post has awakened great opposition on the part of some who

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